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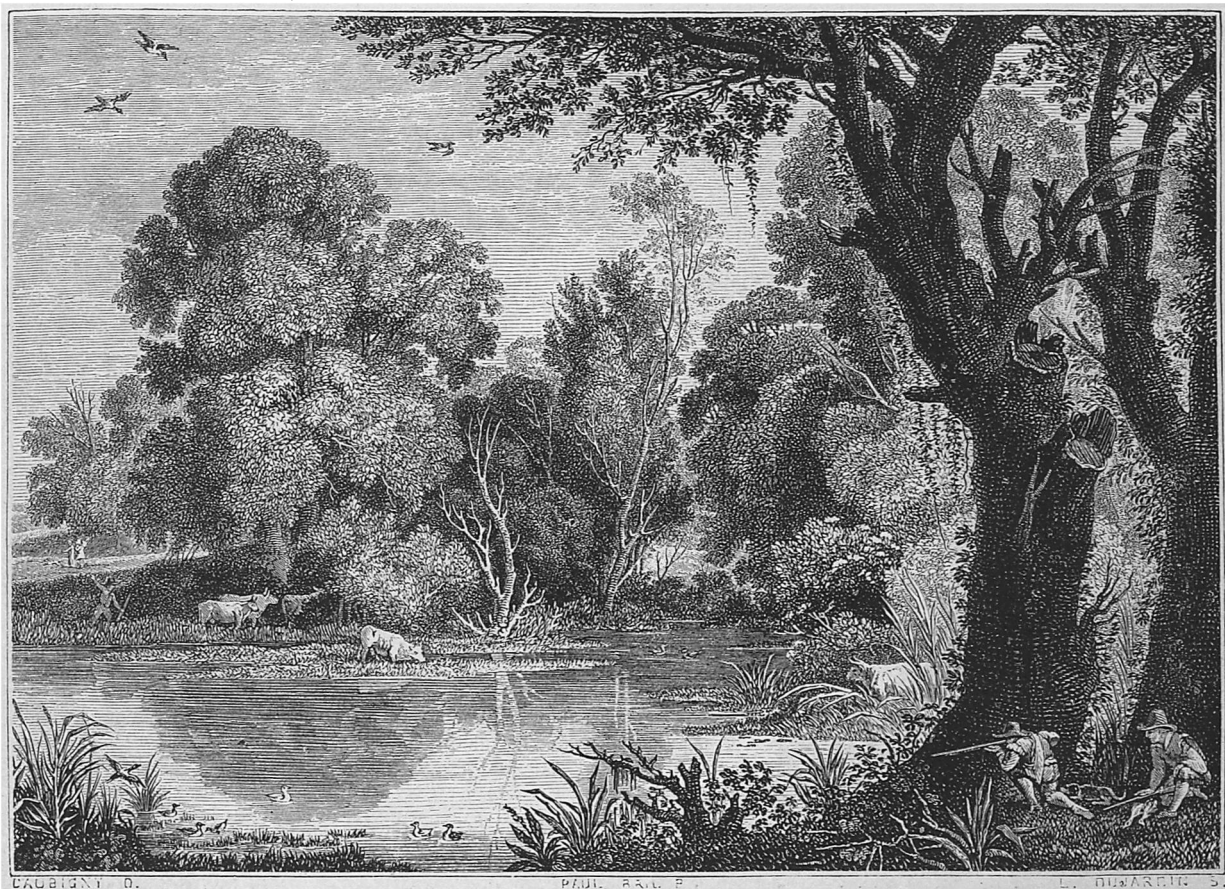
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In France there are a great number of Bril's paintings at Fontainebleau. The artists who have painted the figures in most of his works are, A. Carrachi, Josepin, Rottenhamer, &c. He has left behind him some drawings very ably executed with the pen and a wash of bistre or Indian ink, upon which he passed hatchings in every direction.

Bril's works have rarely made their appearance at public

sales, but whenever they have done so, they have fetched tolerably good prices. We have found neither marks nor signature upon any of them. His etchings are marked thus—

**Paulus Bril Inuent.
& Fecit: 1520.**



DUCK SHOOTING.—FROM A PAINTING BY PAUL BRIL.

ALBERT DURER.

"Here, when art was still religion, with a simple, reverent heart,
Lived and laboured Albrecht Durer, the evangelist of art;
Here, in silence and in sorrow, toiling still with busy hand,
Like an emigrant he wandered, seeking for the Better Land.
Emigravit is the inscription on the tombstone where he lies;
Dead he is not, but departed,—for the artist never dies.
Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sunshine seems more fair,
That he once has trod its pavement, that he once has breathed
its air!"

Thus sings our great poet Longfellow, with his accustomed truthfulness and beauty. In what he here says he does but echo the honest sentiments of all enlightened Europe. There is none who does not reverence Germany for having produced such a man—none who does not love art more because he was one of her disciples. The mere mention of his name awakens in our minds the strangest ideas, and opens to our view the perspective of a new world. It is, as it were, a calling up of all the dreams of Germany. Mysterious shapes appear to us at first indistinctly, looming through a mist. Here, an unknown cavalier makes his way among rocks and leafless trees, followed by a demon with outstretched claws, and accompanied by the figure of Death mounted on his white horse. He advances with a firm step, regardless of the

monsters which surround him, and the reptiles which crawl at his feet. There, a knight, who, like Perseus, has wings attached to his heels, and a helmet in the shape of a gigantic butterfly, has checked his horse near a ruined arch, and knocks at the portal of a deserted mansion, as though he expects the spirits of the dead to rise and come forth. Yonder, an immense bat, spreading its hideous wings in the clouds, hovers over a woman seated on the sea-shore, in an attitude of dejection, her name is Melancholy. In these obscure regions fabulous heroes and nameless beings are strangely intermingled with the characters of sacred history and the executioners of Jesus Christ. It might be said, that whole legions pass before us. But we are surprised to find those symbolical figures, which inspire us with a secret terror—we know not

wherefore—ranged side by side with known and familiar objects; peasants dancing on the green, and carrying baskets of fruit; the smiling faces of young girls, shaded by the simple lace cap, such as are seen at the village church or by the quiet fireside. Domestic scenes and common-place things are singularly intermingled with the spectres of the Black Forest, or the strange phantoms of German superstition—the most familiar of which is the shaggy and horned demon. This elegant gallant, who is walking in the country with his richly-dressed and smiling lady, is evidently in happy ignorance, that close to him, concealed by the trunk of a tree, is grim Death, in the shape of a living skeleton. Oh! strange and mysterious world, in which the most ideal poetry is confounded with the simplest realities! Such a world is presented to us in the works of Albert Durer. But if studied more minutely and patiently, another medley, not less surprising than the former, engages our attention. Those visions, at first so indistinct, have assumed bodily shapes, whose outlines are clearly defined; those phantoms have taken precise forms, and their draperies fall in stiff metallic-looking folds. We might even count the hairs of their heads, those of the manes of their coursers, the rivets in their cuirasses, the blades of grass which they tread under foot, the smallest stones in the house which they inhabit, and the most minute of the leaves of the trees which shelter it. And when we turn to the man whose labours have produced these images, so lifelike and yet so imaginary, we acknowledge this strange visionary to be the most skilful goldsmith, the most indefatigable engraver, the most inimitable painter; that he loved to carve on the brass the chimeras of the Apocalypse, and to chisel his own dreams on steel. We find that this lover of the marvellous and fantastic pursued the study of the positive sciences; that this imaginative poet was a consummate mathematician; that this visionary was also a skilful geometrician.

Albert Durer is rightfully acknowledged as the father of the German school. He was the living personification of the genius and talent of Germany. Historical events, consequent upon the grand struggle for the reformation of the Church, the peasant war, and the thirty years' war, retarded the progress of art in Germany from the time of its foundation by the great Nuremberg painter. It remained in *statu quo* for nearly two centuries, so that the works of Albert Durer continued to be the highest expression of German art, and, so to speak, her best struck medal.

One of Durer's earliest works, which bears the same date as his first celebrated picture, 1498, is a series of wood-engravings representing "The Apocalypse." It was certainly a strange beginning. To measure his strength in the outset against a subject at once so whimsical, terrible and sublime, of which it even seems impossible to form a conception; to mount, for his *coup d'essai* "Death's Pale Horse," and to plunge into the boundless regions of the imaginary world,—none but a German would have dared such an enterprise. The spectres which had terrified the recluse of Patmos were represented by Durer in a set of fifteen engravings. A wild and mystic poetry pervades them, the artist at once transports us into the realms of another world. He there shows us ominous horsemen, one bearing a bow, another a naked sword, the third a pair of scales, and the fourth the scythe of Death, the destroyer of whole nations. With what fury do they rush onwards! See how their panting and ungovernable chargers bound through the regions of space! These are no earthly steeds: steeds, such as these, require the gigantic riders, who have seized their manes and press their flanks. In what dream did this chain of phantoms appear to Durer? Into what sleep did he fall to see pass before him visions revealed by the pen of an inspired apostle, those terrible symbols of which the significance is to us unknown!

One of the most remarkable amongst these engravings is the eighth. There are seen the angels of the Euphrates let loose by the anger of heaven, and massacring the third of the human race. Their gleaming swords fall with indescribable fury on all sides indiscriminately. In the heavens are seen the aerial riders mounted on beasts possessing the bodies of

horses, and the heads of lions; this is the flying host destined for the annihilation of the rest of the human race. Already the emperor, the bishop, the nun, and the monk, have fallen victims to their fury; here the Protestant artist has betrayed his thoughts in attempting to explain the inexplicable vision of the Evangelist, for, in the ruin of these hooded and mitred personages, we recognise that the graver has been guided by a friend of Melancthon and a disciple of Luther.

There is something most singular and original in Albert Durer's paintings and engravings, they are impregnated by the most misty spiritualism, and at the same time characterised by a patient and minute execution brought to the very highest finish. One would say that the artist observed this accuracy in order to prevent his poetic ideas from becoming indistinct. The more fanciful and obscure the subject, the greater pains did he take to render the figures plain and decisive; if we cannot fathom the profundity of his meaning, we can at least catch the reality of the figures which express it. Take, for example, his celebrated engraving known under the name of the "Great Horse," you will be astonished at first by the extreme delicacy of the work, you will admire the distinctness of the outline, the exactness with which the accessories are rendered, and the incredible patience of the engraver; but if you seek to penetrate the sense of the composition, you will be at a loss to know what motive actuates this fierce-looking warrior, who, holding his horse by the bridle, stops at the portal of a ruinous castle. It will only inspire you with an undefinable feeling of terror, and, in endeavouring to catch the meaning of the artist, you are lost in a bewildering maze of conjecture.

The love of the extravagant and fantastic, observable from the first in the works of the great German painter, never abandoned him. In that dreamer "Melancholy," who, seated on the sea-shore, seems seeking to penetrate with her gaze into infinite space, he has apparently expressed the inspiration of his own soul. For our own part, we have this picture always before us. How is it possible ever to forget an engraving of Albert Durer's, even though seen but once! We ever see her, her proud and noble head thoughtfully resting upon one hand, her long hair falling in dishevelled tresses upon her shoulders. Her folded wings, emblematic of that impotent aspiration, which directs her gaze towards heaven, whilst a book, closed and useless as her wings, rests upon her knee. No, nothing can be more gloomy, more penetrating, than the expression of this figure. From the peculiarity of the folds of her dress, one would say, that she was enveloped in iron draperies. Near her is a symbolical sun-dial, with the bell which marks the hours as they glide away. The sun is sinking into the ocean, and darkness will soon envelop the earth. Above hovers a strange-looking bat, which, spreading its ominous wings, bears a pennon, on which is written the word—"Melancholia."

All is symbolical in this composition, of which the sentiment is sublime. Melancholy holds in her right hand a pair of compasses and a circle, the emblem of that eternity in which her thoughts are lost. Various instruments appertaining to the arts and sciences lie scattered around her; after having made use of them, she has laid them aside, and has fallen into a profound reverie. As a type of the mistrust which has crept into her heart, with avarice and doubt, a bunch of keys is suspended at her girdle; above her is an hour-glass, the acknowledged emblem of her transitory existence. But nothing is more admirable than the face of Melancholy, both in the severe beauty of her features and the depth of her gaze, in which may be recognised a likeness to Agnes,—a remarkable fact, which I do not think has before been noticed! In 1514 Albert Durer conceived the type of Dr. Faust, which illustrates that state of mind in which the result of science is but doubt, the result of experience but bitter and disheartening disappointment. Three centuries before the age of Goethe, an artist depicted the grief which in our days torments the minds of choice spirits; but the painter was not so well understood as the poet, although the poet was evidently inspired by the painter. Neither the sentiment of melancholy nor the word which expresses it had appeared in art before the time of Albert Durer.

We will now speak of the celebrated engraving called "Death's Horse." It is said that Albert Durer intended to represent Franz Von Sickingen, whose name was dreaded throughout Germany, thus giving him a terrible warning. An S traced on the picture goes far to corroborate this supposition. But, setting aside the possibility of this allusion, and also the idea that the artist intended to represent his own journey through life, this great work obtains a more lasting importance and a more general application. An old ballad has moreover suggested another signification. It there presents to us the model of the Christian, *sans peur et sans reproche*. "Let Death and the Devil attack me, says the knight, I will conquer both the Devil and Death." Such was Durer's love of the marvellous and the fantastic, that many subjects for pictures and engravings were furnished him by his dreams. Among them is one of the most singular water-colour paintings which has ever been exhibited; this picture is in the Ambrasian collection at Vienna. There is seen a large sheet of water which washes the shores of a plain, upon which are several houses. Over this water hangs a huge black cloud, which is discharging itself in torrents of rain. On every side the air is filled with vapour. Albert Durer wrote these words beneath this painting:—

"On Thursday night, the eve of the Pentecost, in the year 1525, I had this vision in my sleep. What torrents of water fell from the heavens! This water struck the earth about four miles from me with such force, such reverberation and noise, the whole country was flooded, and such a mortal dread seized me, that I awoke: I again fell asleep. Then the remainder of the water fell nearly as abundantly as before, some at a greater distance, some nearer. It seemed to fall from such a height, that to my mind the descent occupied a long time. But as the flood approached nearer and nearer, the deluge became so rapid and resounding, that fear seized me, and I again awoke. My whole body trembled, and it was long before I could recover myself; but in the morning when I rose I painted what I had seen. May God order all for the best!"

"ALBERT DURER."

This is certainly a most artless description. However, Joseph Heller, an eminent German writer, the author of the best life of Albert Durer which has yet appeared, would not allow his ingenuity to be vanquished. He spends much time in explaining this water-colour painting otherwise so incomprehensible. He gives with the utmost care the most minute details, is even so scrupulous in his examination as to take note of the manufacturer's mark on the piece of paper used by Albert Durer. Moreover, the learned commentator had this mark engraved and joined to his text.

Notwithstanding the generally abstract character of German genius, the serious and thoughtful habits of Albert Durer did not always keep him aloof from the world of realities. He sometimes abandoned the region of chimeras and phantoms, to work at the grandest and noblest religious subjects. "The Martyrs of the Christian Legion," which is to be seen in the Austrian Belvedere gallery; "The Adoration of the Magi," which is preserved in the gallery of the Uffizzi at Florence; "The Trinity," surrounded by the angelic host; these and many other pictures prove that this great master respected the limits which separate the imaginary from the visible. Some out of this class are his *chefs-d'œuvre*, but the most perfect of all adorns the Pinakothek at Munich. It is divided into two compartments, one of which contains the apostles St. John and St. Peter, the other St. Mark and St. Paul. It was the last important production of the great artist. He had the satisfaction of ending his career by a happy and eminently successful effort towards the sublime. He painted these figures of the Apostles with the intention of leaving them in his will to be placed in the Town Hall at Nuremberg, in order to preserve there, by the memory of his genius, the religious fervour of the Lutherans; for Durer had embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, and the questions to which they gave rise constantly occupied his thoughts. He painted beneath "The Apostles," long inscriptions gathered from their epistles and gospels, recommending us not to neglect the study of the scriptures, or to believe in the doctrines of false

prophets. He has given to each one of these figures a distinct and well-defined character. The exile of Patmos is represented as possessing a passionate, enthusiastic, and melancholy temperament; St. Peter, with his gray hairs and calm deportment, expresses contemplative repose; St. Mark bears the aspect of a hopeful man and a zealous propagator of the faith; the figure of St. Paul, armed with a naked sword, and carrying the bible, is the symbol of action, energy, and imperious will; he casts a severe and searching glance around him, as if to discover all blasphemers, in order to destroy them with the sword of the living God.

We must not suppose that Durer never relaxed from his severe gravity. His familiar letters sometimes discover an inclination to gaiety, at times even an approach to harmless raillery. It is true that they were written at Venice, away from his wife. He writes thus to his friend Willibald Pirckheimer:—

"I should judge from what you have written me, that you are anxious to do the amiable, but that becomes you as perfume does a lansquinet. You think that when you have decked yourself out in silks, and made yourself agreeable to the women, that you have done all that you as modest a should not be any you have too many think, if you wish in a month, you Give my greeting Lorentz, and your also to our lady—was the name to his wife); thank for recollecting me, and tell her that she is a ' salope.'* Item. You will be glad to hear that my picture has succeeded beyond my expectations; I have obtained by it much honour, but little profit. During my absence I have not made more than 200 ducats; I have refused to undertake some important works, that I may be at liberty to return. I have now effectually silenced all those painters who said, 'He is a good engraver, but as to painting, he has no idea of colouring. Item. My French cloak and my 'Walsch' coat greet you . . ."



is needful. Were man as myself, I gry with you; but 'amours,' and I to pay them all off will ruin yourself. to Borscht and M. pretty servant girl, accountant (this which Dürer gave your housemaid

"ALBERT DURER."

Many of Albert Durer's paintings and engravings belong to the class called *genre*. He dealt with fanciful subjects as well as familiar and rural scenes. Sometimes two lovers are represented walking affectionately together in the country; sometimes the villagers enjoying their evening dance; sometimes a peasant attempting to win a young girl by his deceitful promises. Durer understood the Flemish style, the peaceful charm of every-day life, the poetry to be found in realities. Albert Durer was not only a painter of the first order, and a wonderful engraver, but he had also learnt to handle the tool of the goldsmith and the chisel of the sculptor. In nearly all the German towns, works in alto-relievo, as well as medallions, are shown to the traveller as his productions.

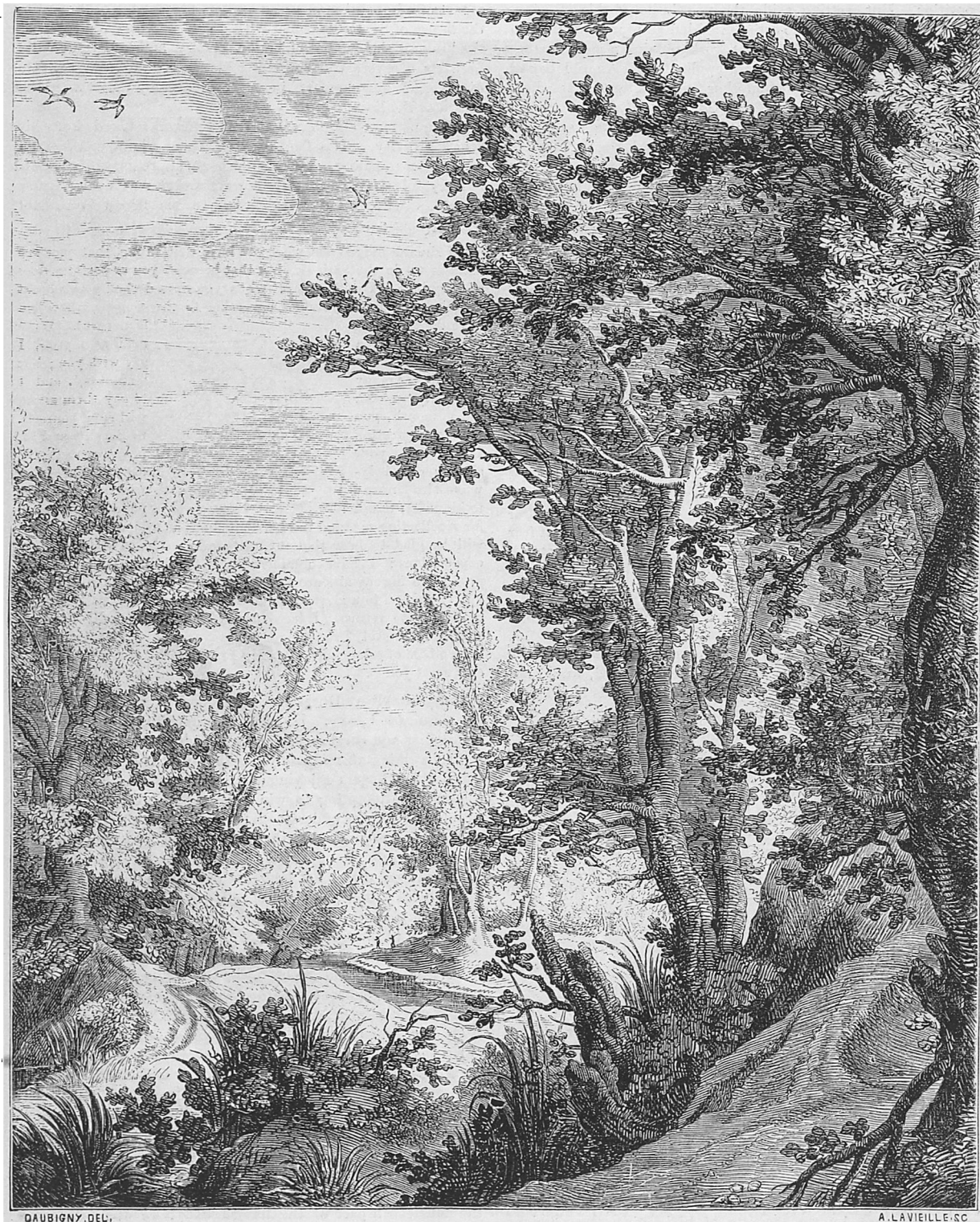
Sculptor, painter, engraver, this great man has also written learned works. Had he been known merely as an author, he would still have borne an illustrious name. His most celebrated work is a "Treatise on the Proportions of the Human Body," in four books.

Having mentioned so celebrated a work, perhaps we may be permitted to express our full opinion. This book has been little read, which is partly the fault of the author. Unintelligible and without animation, it disconcerts and discourages the reader in the outset. For instance, there is no order in his arrangement, he does not set to work as a methodical mind would have done, "commencing with the large divisions and ending with the small." Before learning the position of the fourteenth part of the human body, we ought to know something about the half. This disagreeable impression, which is produced by the diffuse character of an ill-arranged book, sufficiently explains why those authors who are fond of clearness have only glanced at Albert Durer's, and imme-

* We give here the original word used, and the grotesque figure of which it is the translation.

diately pronounced it incomprehensible; sometimes, however, we may gather from it beautiful ideas. Albert Durer seems to have believed that nature has arranged even her deformities with a certain regularity, that even ugliness is harmo-

which is common to all countries and ages, and which exerts a universal influence. It is true, that occasionally, especially in his picture or "The Apostles," he approaches sublimity. As no painter has expressed grief with so much



A FOREST SCENE.—FROM A PAINTING BY PAUL BRIL.

nious,—an idea which has been very cleverly developed by Diderot.

Albert Durer's exclusively German taste prevented him from attaining that true beauty, that harmonious perfection,

depth and force as he in his painting of "The Passion," which he began three times, so none has displayed more grace and tenderness than is shown in his "Life of the Virgin." A zealous Lutheran, from nothing did Durer gather greater

inspiration than from Holy Writ, and being filled with that Christian sentiment which obtained such influence in the middle ages, he naturally displayed his religious feelings in his works. Judging from his later productions, it seems

limited sense of the word—that is to say, his works are not only remarkable for their national character, but the greater part of them only suit the taste of the population of the Upper Rhine. One is struck with astonishment at his



ALBERT-DURER P.

AI-CABASSON..D.

CH—JARDIN · S.C.

MELANCHOLY.

probable that he contemplated at one time the union of Gothic and Italian art. Whilst Luther broke with Rome, Durer held out the hand of brotherhood to Raphael. Nevertheless, the painter of the "Death's Head" is too *German*, in the

strange symbols, his thoughtful and singular attitudes, and his draperies are not less surprising than his figures. He disposes them in large masses, and breaks them into a multitude of little angular folds, which often gives them the

appearance of metal. His colouring is clear and delicate, and too brilliant to be natural; it is very like that used for the illumination of ancient manuscripts, and of an intensity which quite offends the eye. His *chiaroscuro* has also a fanciful appearance; in it the light and shadow play, as in one of

those powerful visions by which his sleep was troubled. In short, all Albert Durer's works, bearing so strongly the impress of German genius, betray the man of the North, who, combining in his life the simplest prose with the most ideal poetry, loves to rise above the world of realities into the realm of dreams.

GERICAULT.

GERICAULT was the son of an advocate of Rouen, and was born in that town in 1791. Unfortunately for him, his birth was as premature as his death; had he come into the world five years later, he would have enjoyed while living the glory which his works merited. But he died at the early age of thirty-three, as yet badly appreciated, understood only by a small number, and despised by those who, in his day, were the oracles of taste. Now the differences to which his works gave rise have disappeared and are forgotten, and there is no personal feeling to influence the judgment which the public may form of them.

He was originally destined to receive a careful and literary education. When fifteen, his father entered him in the Lycée Imperial. What then took place was what might have been expected to take place in the case of a youth of more than ordinary energy. His predominating tastes and tendencies revealed themselves with extraordinary rapidity; and so impatient did he grow to become an artist, and above all a painter of horses, that to pursue his classical studies was out of the question; for horses were his passion even from infancy. Whenever he had a holiday, he spent it in the riding-school, and at Franconi's, whom he thought the greatest of men. He often hung about the doors of the nobility, for the purpose of watching their horses being driven off in their carriages, and often ran after them like the street *gamins*. When seventeen years of age, he was placed in the studio of Carlo Vernet. After leaving him, he placed himself under Guérin, to whom his peculiar mode of colouring appeared ridiculous in the extreme. Géricault had studied in the Museum, and had there commenced to copy Rubens at the very outset—a piece of audacity till then unheard of—so that he brought with him racy tones, the mannerized forms, and a good deal of boldness. He now found his position most uncomfortable. He thought that he would one day become a great painter; his master thought not, and in fact advised him to give up thoughts of painting altogether. This hurt him greatly, but did not by any means dishearten him. On leaving Guérin he completed his education by reading the English poets, and by the study of Italian, music, and by diligent attention to the antique. He also spent much of his time in copying the old masters.

Géricault was then a fine young man, above the middle height, well proportioned, and elegant in his manners, a great admirer of the women, and greatly admired by them, and quite a lion on the Champs de Mars. Now-a-days, he would have been merely a member of the jockey club, and an exquisite; but the gaieties, and frivolities, and rascalities of the turf had no bad effect on Géricault. On the contrary, they furnished him with a rich store of materials for study and observation. It was not the fop or "fast man," who went a hunting and rode steeple-chases; it was the artist. His father, however, and his family were so opposed to his following the vocation he had chosen, that they did not even allow him funds to provide himself with a studio, and he was compelled to make use of those of his friends. He continued his course with success, barring a foolish, but temporary abandonment of his profession for the purpose of entering the royalist garde du corps, after the restoration in 1814. He was soon disgusted, as was every man of mind in France, by the feeble and ridiculous attempts of the Bourbons to restore the old régime, and returned to his first love. He now resolved to conform to the old and time-honoured custom of artists spending some time in Italy, and set out thither in 1817. He was not long in Rome before his style became greatly modified. He studied the frescoes of Michael Angelo, and of

many others; the subdued tones of the paintings in the churches, from which age and the smoke of the candles had taken all their brilliancy, quite captivated him. Impressionable and excitable, he began to doubt his own force, and ask himself what was he in the presence of these giants, whom lapse of time had only made greater, and, he set about painting gray and brown purposely. On his return from Italy, he already began to throw slight upon colour, and speak of all colourists with disdain. So it is true, after all, that Italy is not useful to everybody. Some run the risk of losing their originality, by coming in contact with the works of these illustrious dead. With them it is impossible to enter into discussion.

At last an opportunity presented itself for Géricault to undertake a great work, which should place him amongst the masters. He chose for his subject the "Shipwreck of the Medusa," the frightful details of which then occupied all minds. It was a terrible one, which perfectly suited the peculiar character of his genius. He prepared for it by severe study and assiduous labour. He familiarised himself with the aspect of death in every possible form, frequented the hospitals for the purpose of watching all the alternations of hope, despair, terror, and anguish in the human countenance. Whoever has visited the Louvre must have observed the "Shipwreck of the Medusa." Those who have not may form some idea of it from Reynolds's engraving. It is a scene of horror, lighted by one ray of hope. Fifteen unfortunates, with livid faces, half naked, with hollow eyes and ferocious aspect, are represented clustered in groups on a raft, badly tied together, and swept by every passing wave. Of the forty-eight who had entrusted themselves to this frail structure, these fifteen only had survived, and for the preceding eight days had been living on the flesh of the dead, who had perished of hunger, or been killed by the sabre, in a mutiny which had broken out, as if to add fresh horrors to the scene. Suddenly one of them perceives a sail in the horizon, has uttered a loud cry, and the others starting up, like galvanised corpses, raise themselves, and stretch out their arms in the direction in which the succour appears. Those who have any strength remaining, seek to climb upon the casks, in order to wave their handkerchiefs in sign of distress; in such a way that all the figures of the painting follow the general movement of ascent, towards the highest point, the point of hope. Some of them, however, in whom only a breath of life still lingers, remain stretched upon the planks of the raft, half floating on the waves. Here a young man rolls wildly about, and tears his hair in despair; there an old man, holding his dead son across his knees, remains mute and immovable, as if thunderstruck. Deaf to the voice of his comrades, who announce their approaching deliverance, his heart seared by suffering, and indifferent whether he lives or dies, he gazes vacantly upon the waves, which so soon shall prove the burying-place of his child.

The painter should rather be congratulated than otherwise upon having made those about to die of the same tone as the dead, and for having given uniformity of colour to the draperies, sails, mast, and cordage; for there was no other means of producing that sombre harmony so necessary to the power of emotion. Unity is, in reality, the secret of strong impressions; and this was so well understood by Géricault, that none of his episodes distract the attention nor divide the interest. If you recur often to that petrified head of the old man, it is because the whole catastrophe seems concentrated in him.